

Bomb Threats

The MP response to a bomb threat is to minimize injuries, damage to property, and disruption of operations. MP respond to a bomb threat by securing the building, controlling traffic and pedestrian movement, and obtaining initial information.

Each unit or activity on an installation will have a bomb threat search and evacuation plan. The plan describes the actions to take when a bomb threat is received. When explosives detector dog teams are available, they will be included in these plans (see Chapter 11).

The initial moments of a bomb threat are crucial to the evaluation of an incident. To assure the successful resolution of a threat, bomb threat contingency plans provide prior planning and training in procedures to take on receipt of a bomb threat.

TELEPHONE BOMB THREATS

When a telephone bomb threat is received, someone has actual knowledge that a device has been planted or a prankster wishes to disrupt an operation. Noting what is said and how it is said during a bomb threat call can help determine which of these reasons is true. The person receiving the call may be the only person to ever have contact with the potential bomber. This is why bomb threat contingency plans must address the need for training persons most likely to receive a bomb threat call. When a bomb threat is received, the receiver must know what to do and how to do it, or valuable information will be lost. Proper training provides the person with the skills to pick out important facts.

Signaling another employee to listen in on the call is worked out in advance where working arrangements allow observation. The second person concentrates on the characteristics of the caller and any

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Bomb threats are usually received by telephone or mail. Or they may be discovered by noticing a suspicious item. Each method requires special procedures to effectively obtain the maximum amount of information from the threat source.

background noises. The receiver of the call concentrates on the exact words of the caller. The receiver must try to keep the caller on the phone as long as possible to allow time to recognize background noises and gain additional information.

The receiver asks the caller for specific information as shown on FBI Form 6-136 (Bomb Threat Checklist). See DA Pam 190-52. If the caller describes what it looks like, how it operates, and its general characteristics, this is known as a *descriptive bomb threat*. A descriptive bomb threat is probably real. The receiver documents the exact wording of the threat. For example, if the caller says, "Specialist Jones, there is a bomb planted on your floor. You and your six coworkers have 20 minutes to clear out," the receiver must note *all* of that information. If the person receiving the call only indicates that a bomb threat was received, an important investigative tool and important information is lost.

EXAMPLE OF A BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

6-136 (Rev. 8-27-77)

**FBI BOMB DATA CENTER**

PLACE THIS CARD UNDER YOUR TELEPHONE

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

1. When is bomb going to explode?
2. Where is it right now?
3. What does it look like?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What will cause it to explode?
6. Did you place the bomb?
7. Why?
8. What is your address?
9. What is your name?

EXACT WORDING OF THE THREAT:

Sex of caller: _____ Race: _____

Age: _____ Length of call: _____

Number at which call is received: _____

Time: _____ Date: ____/____/____ FBI/DOJ

BOMB THREAT**CALLER'S VOICE:**

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Stutter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excited | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slow | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soft | <input type="checkbox"/> Ragged |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loud | <input type="checkbox"/> Clearing throat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laughter | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crying | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracking voice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Normal | <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distinct | <input type="checkbox"/> Accent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred | <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Whispered |

If voice is familiar, who did it sound like?

BACKGROUND SOUNDS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Factory machinery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crockery | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal noises |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voices | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PA System | <input type="checkbox"/> Static |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Long distance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motor | <input type="checkbox"/> Booth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office machinery | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

THREAT LANGUAGE:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well spoken (educated) | <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foul | <input type="checkbox"/> Taped |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational | <input type="checkbox"/> Message read by threat maker |

REMARKS: _____**Report call immediately to:** _____

Phone number _____

Date ____/____/____

Name _____

Position _____

Phone number _____

Recording the exact date and time of the phone call is important. By determining the time of the bomb threat, identification of the bomb site by background sounds may be possible.

As part of the bomb threat plan, a bomb threat checklist is developed to be placed near telephones. FBI Form 6-136 is a good example and can be placed beneath a telephone for easy access. If this form is not available, then a copy of the form should be used to develop a locally produced form. A bomb threat report

form is in most local installation telephone directories.

The person receiving the bomb threat call immediately reports to the designated supervisor or security person with the completed bomb threat checklist. This action will facilitate proper emergency notifications and help lessen the possibility of panic. The receiver does NOT spread the word about the bomb threat before notifying the supervisor who then notifies the MP.

MAIL BOMBS

A small number of explosive devices have been mailed over the years resulting in death, injury, and destruction of property. Contingency planning is required to help prevent mail bomb disasters. Contingency planners first consider which organizations are possible targets. A bomb can be enclosed in either a parcel or an envelope, its outward appearance limited only by the imagination of the sender. However, past mail bombs have exhibited some unique characteristics which can assist in identifying a suspect mailing. To apply these factors, it is important for planners to know the type of mail normally received by an organization. Motives for mail bombs often are revenge, extortion, terrorism, or business disputes.

The information contained in the postal pamphlet *Bombs By Mail* should be available to all mail handlers. A copy of this pamphlet should be in each unit mail room.

A mail handler or recipient of mail who is suspicious of a letter or parcel and cannot verify the contents with the addressee or sender, must not open the article or put it in water or a confined space like a desk drawer or a filing cabinet. Mail handlers and recipients must isolate the suspected mail and evacuate the immediate area. If possible, windows are opened in the immediate area to help vent potential explosive gases. The MP or postal inspector is immediately contacted to report the suspected mail bomb.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAIL BOMBS

- ☐ Mail bombs may bear restricted endorsements such as "personal" or "private" when the addressee does not normally receive personal mail at the office.
- ☐ Addressee's name and/or title may be inaccurate.
- ☐ Mail may reflect distorted handwriting.
- ☐ The name and address may be prepared with homemade labels or cut-and-paste lettering.
- ☐ Mail may have protruding wires, aluminum foil, visible oil stains, and/or they may emit a peculiar odor.
- ☐ Mail may have an excessive amount of postage stamps affixed.
- ☐ Mail may feel rigid or appear uneven or lopsided.
- ☐ Parcel bombs may be unprofessionally wrapped with several combinations of tape used to secure the package and may be marked "Fragile—Handle With Care" or "Rush—Do Not Delay."
- ☐ Parcel bombs may be an irregular shape or have soft spots or bulges.
- ☐ Parcel bombs may make a buzzing or ticking noise or a sloshing sound.
- ☐ Pressure or resistance may be noted when removing contents from an envelope or parcel.

SUSPICIOUS ITEMS

Employees must be alert to determine if a suspicious item belongs in the area. An employee should know if a certain briefcase belongs, if a flower arrangement is new, if a recently delivered package is expected, or if a package in the corner is someone's lunch. One way to do this is to keep clutter to a minimum.

When a bomb threat occurs, all personnel must quickly scan their immediate areas and identify anything out of the ordinary. This may be the only way to discover a bomb

device. Personnel know that if a suspected bomb device is discovered they DO NOT touch the device. Instead, they make sure that the device does not belong. They ensure that no one touches it. And they report the discovery to a supervisor, security officer, or MP. Supervisors know that if a suspected bomb device is found, they consider immediate, total evacuation of the building, and they await arrival of MP and explosive ordnance disposal personnel before attempting to reenter the building.

PERSONNEL TO NOTIFY

The MP desk sergeant is the first person to notify when a bomb threat has been received. The desk sergeant then notifies personnel as shown in the local station SOP. In some locations it might be the responsibility of the personnel in the building receiving the bomb threat to make the notifications. Prior planning must be done to determine who is responsible for notification.

As a rule, the MP are notified first. MP will respond as the initial investigating agency for a bomb threat. MP will cordon off the target area, provide traffic control, and obtain facts for the initial investigation. MP do not conduct a bomb search, because they are not familiar with the search area. Then other personnel are notified as dictated by local SOP like higher commanders, public affairs personnel, or staff duty personnel. Then fire department personnel are notified.

Fire department personnel normally respond to the scene and stand by. Fire is a common occurrence in connection with an explosive detonation. Early notification of the fire department personnel can assist in minimizing property damage and injury should a device detonate. Then EOD personnel are notified. Under normal situations, EOD personnel do not respond to a bomb threat unless a suspicious item is located. But they may be able to tell if other threats of a similar type have been received and if a bomb was subsequently discovered. They may also give guidance if a device is located. (AR 75-15 identifies EOD responsibilities.) Then medical personnel are notified. The potential for injury with any bomb threat is high. Time can be saved by having trained medical personnel stand by with an ambulance in case of injuries.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

It is necessary during any bomb situation to have a bomb threat EOC located at the bomb site. Having an EOC as a control point for search teams, communications, access lists, and release of information will prevent confusion as to who is in charge.

The post commander may designate a bomb scene officer and an alternate to be in

charge of the bomb site operation. Both the bomb scene officer and the alternate must have special training in bomb threats and emergency situations. The bomb scene officer or the alternate represent the commander and will respond to all bomb threats.

The only person who may authorize release of information from the scene is the

bomb scene officer. And the only person who can release the information to the public is the public affairs officer. Keeping tight control on information can prevent a wave of bomb threats. For example, in a recent bombing incident in a major US city, after the initial release of the information, 400 bomb threats occurred in a one-hour time period.

During a bomb threat, the commander or his designated bomb scene officer—

- Decides if the facility will react to the threat or conduct business as usual.
- Determines if a supervisor's search will be conducted without evacuation.
- Decides if the building will be evacuated and searched.
- Serves as the primary person responsible for the search team.
- Executes control of operations within the EOC.
- After the search, if no bomb is discovered, determines if and when normal operations will resume.
- If a bomb is discovered, immediately clears the area and notifies EOD.

COMMUNICATION

Reliable communication from the bomb scene is essential. The bomb scene officer will continually keep the command post updated and informed of ongoing actions. However, radio transmissions, except for those of extremely low power, should not be used within 100 meters of the affected area. If possible, all elements of the bomb scene operation should use the telephone to maintain contact with the EOC.

Types of communications which may be used to maintain contact with the teams within a building or facility are—

- Runners.
- Whistles.
- Field phones, TA 312.
- Hand signals (if one point is visible by all).

EVACUATION

Evacuation is not necessary for all bomb threats. Evacuation is determined by the bomb scene officer only after a thorough evaluation of all available information. The results of the bomb threat checklist, information from support agencies, and the criticality of the mission of the targeted facility are considered. The bomb scene officer also considers that just disrupting operations serves the purpose of the bomber. If the bomber describes in detail the type of device, its location, and/or the placing of the device, then the bomb scene officer may have more reason to believe that the device has, indeed, been planted.

BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

- ☐ All persons will make a preliminary search around their immediate areas for suspicious items.
- ☐ All persons, as they leave, will remove those items that they brought in (briefcases, thermos bottles, lunch bags), turn off radios, and unplug office machines.
- ☐ Windows and doors will be left open to help dissipate any explosive force.
- ☐ All cabinets and drawers will be left unlocked (classified cabinets may be an exception) to make it easier for the searchers.
- ☐ When evacuation of a building is accomplished, only authorized personnel are permitted entry until the threat is resolved.

If a device is actually discovered, either as a result of a bomb threat or during routine operations, evacuation procedures should be carried out expeditiously. All persons will evacuate to a predetermined assembly area. But this area must be at least 100 meters from the structure. This distance takes into account items like propane bottles, natural gas lines, or welding equipment that could contribute to the explosive force of a bomb within a facility. All personnel at the

assembly area must be accounted for to determine if anyone is still in the building. And a contact point can be determined in case an item cannot be verified as belonging in that area.

Depending upon the mission of the facility, it may be necessary to evacuate a building in sections. Some areas where partial evacuation may be necessary are—

- Hospitals.
- Special weapons areas.
- Classified storage areas.

Partial evacuation involves risks. There are no guarantees as to what damage will occur if a device should detonate. Therefore, total evacuation is desirable when possible.

SEARCHES

There are two types of search: a supervisor's search and a search team search. Both types of search move from the outside in, from the lowest level to the highest, and from public access areas to more restricted access areas.

Supervisor's Search

A supervisor's search can be conducted by a few of the activity's personnel using a quick-paced method to look for suspicious items. It can be useful only if all areas are orderly. If the area to be searched is cluttered, then a supervisor's search will not be effective.

In determining if a supervisor's search will be used, it should be remembered that supervisory searches can be up to 60 percent effective. They also have the advantage of limiting the disruptions of the operation, because the search can be done without evacuation of personnel.

Search Team Search

A search team search requires that the building be evacuated until after the search has been accomplished. The search for an explosive device is one of the most important actions involved in the bomb threat procedures. Two-man teams composed of persons assigned to and familiar with the

activity should search the building where a bomb threat has been received. Preferably, these persons should be volunteers. It must be stressed that the searchers must know or be able to determine if an item actually belongs in the area; thus they should be persons assigned to that activity. For this reason MP and EOD personnel should not search the area.

It is imperative that persons forming search teams be well trained. Training accomplishes more than just preparing the members of a search team; it increases their confidence and morale. MP must make every effort to help provide local training. And search team members must be willing to practice periodically to maintain proficiency.

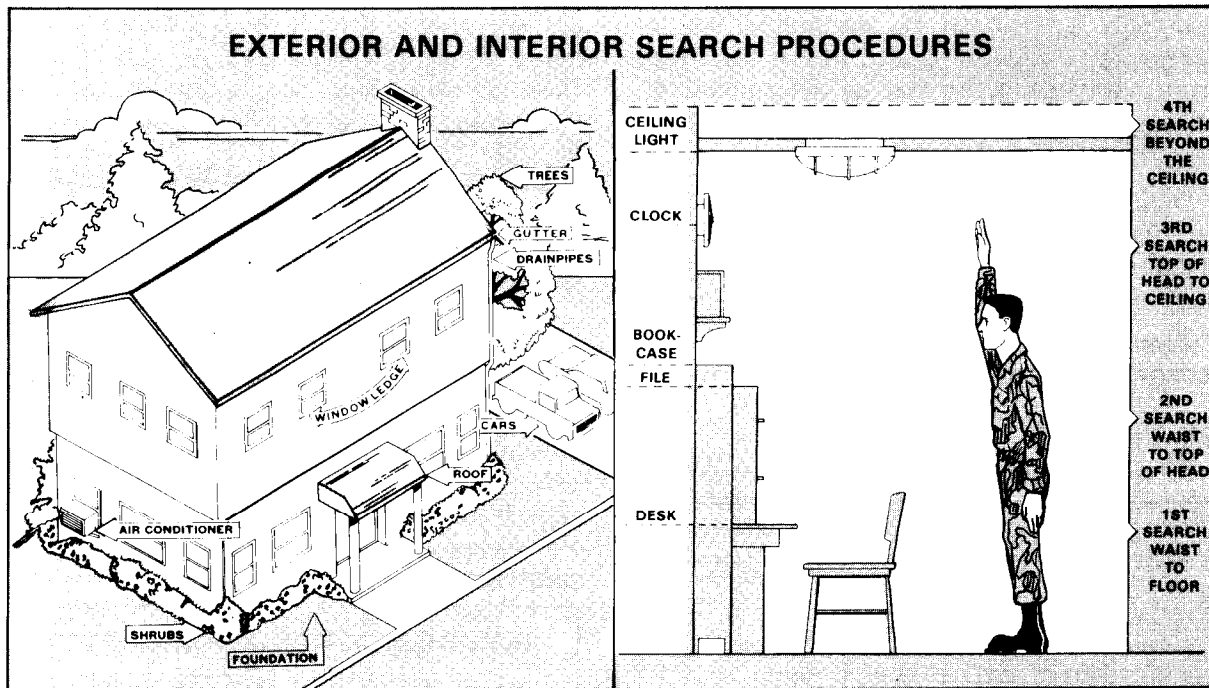
DAMAGE CONTROL MEASURES

Search teams must know the actions to take on discovery of a device and measures to reduce damage. They must learn that if a suspicious item is actually located, it requires concise and immediate action. They must learn—

- NOT TO TOUCH THE DEVICE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
- If evacuation is not already accomplished, to immediately evacuate all nonessential personnel.
- Even if there may be more than one device, to discontinue the search until EOD personnel arrive to supervise.

They must also know the measures to take to reduce damage if EOD determines that time allows. They must know to—

- Disconnect or shut off any gas lines leading to the facility.
- Open windows and doors.
- Remove items which may add to the explosive force (gasoline, lubricants, paint).
- Sandbag the area around the device but never place any item on the device itself.
- Evacuate personnel further than the 300 meter range, preferably behind a windowless structure.



The search team looks everywhere and at everything. Unless a specific area is indicated in the threat, the search team begins with the exterior and moves to the interior. Then they move into public access areas like lobbies, restrooms, waiting areas, and snack machine areas. And finally, they check limited public access areas, like basements, roofs, and storage rooms.

The external area must be searched first. The search must cover all feasible areas where a device may be planted. It must be done systematically. Special consideration must be given to—

- Window ledges.
 - Bushes.
 - Garbage cans.
 - Flower arrangements.
 - Air conditioner units.
 - Automobiles. (Extreme caution must be used when search involves automobiles.)
- Any item usually not found in the area or any item noted as being out of place should be viewed with suspicion.

Most often a bomb device is thought to be hidden somewhere inside a facility. But a

device may be planted against a facility. Depending upon the nature of the device, an enormous amount of damage can be caused by a device planted outside a facility. Both the exterior and interior of the bomb site area must be searched.

After the exterior search is completed, the search inside the facility is begun. Interior searches are conducted from the lowest level of the facility to the highest and from common access areas to more restricted access areas.

First, all public access areas are searched. Then offices with public access are searched. And finally, offices, storage areas, and areas with restricted public access are searched. Rooms that have been searched should be marked with crepe paper or colored tape to ensure efficiency and to speed up the process.

The searchers enter a room, stop, remain still, and listen for any unusual sounds. (In the evacuation phase, all machines are to be unplugged.) Searchers will make a quick visual scan of the room for obvious, unusual items. They divide the room in half and then into four levels. Their first search includes

items such as desks, chairs, and garbage cans that lie within the area from the waist to the floor. Their second search includes items such as filing cabinets, table tops, and lower shelves that lie within the area from the waist to the top of the head. Their third

search includes items such as picture frames, shelves, cupboards, windows, and vents that lie within the area from the top of the head to the ceiling. Their fourth search includes checking all vents, pipes, and ceiling supports beyond the ceiling.

AFTER-ACTION PROCEDURES

After a device has been rendered safe or it has detonated, the area is sealed off by the MP until criminal investigator and EOD personnel thoroughly investigate the area. If a device detonates, the most minute fragments are retrieved in order to determine the composition of the device. All persons not directly involved with the investigation are restricted from the scene.

After-action reports are completed and must contain specific information such as—

- Nature of incident.
- Action taken.
- Outcome.
- Additional information.

INFORMATION IN AN AFTER-ACTION REPORT

BOMB THREAT	BOMB DISCOVERY	BOMB DETONATION
<p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 0;">NATURE OF INCIDENT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Who received call?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Where was call received?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was the telephone number of line to which call was made?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was date and time of call?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What did caller say, and what was the response of the receiver, if any?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Was caller male or female?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was approximate age of caller?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Were there any unusual speech characteristics of the caller such as lisp, accent, dialect?</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">ACTION TAKEN</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Who was notified immediately after call was received?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was time of evacuation, if applicable?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What search techniques were employed?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was discovered, if anything?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What time did personnel reenter the building, if there was an evacuation?</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 0;">NATURE OF INCIDENT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> How was bomb discovered?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Where was bomb discovered?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Who discovered bomb?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was date and time of discovery?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Was it established that only one bomb existed?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What is the description of the device?</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">ACTION TAKEN</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What members of the search and EOD team arrived on the scene?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What time did they arrive?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was the disposition of the device?</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 0;">NATURE OF INCIDENT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Where did bomb explode?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was the date and approximate time of explosion?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Who reported incident?</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">ACTION TAKEN</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What members of the search and EOD teams arrived on the scene?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What time did they arrive?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> How were the injured, if any, treated/evacuated?</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">OUTCOME</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was the extent of property damage, if known?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Was building secured for further investigation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> How many persons were killed or injured?</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What was the color, description, and the sound of explosion, if observed?</p>